

CHAPTER 1: SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

We are seeking endogenous mental technology to be manifested in the sphere of immediate consciousness and brought into focus – the goal for you is to learn how to willfully tap into your psyche for the purpose of finding songs that no one but you have ever heard . . . and then to make those songs real by learning any instrument(s) you feel are necessary to bring about your vision. Do you not believe that your very body and the environment around you are wellsprings of music? Do you not believe that you can program yourself in way I'm describing? We are seeking endogenous mental technology. 'Endogenous' means that it's located *inside* of you. Serotonin, a monoamine neuro-transmitter, known for processing light in the brain, is *endogenous*. It is inside of you. It is inside of your head.

There is always a part of you that is making sure that your heart beats, that your hair grows; when you trip, you probably raise your arms to block the impact of the fall – without thinking too hard about it.

There is also a part of you that is an Artist. *No one is without an Inner Artist*. It is your Artist Within that is responsible for the way you feel when you listen to your favorite albums. Get to know this part of yourself. It needs attention. It needs food. The Artist Within makes you *more than just a rote, commonplace, wind-up cymbal monkey*.

As far as Western medicine is concerned, and as well as a significant majority of mankind believes, the *brain is the seat of learning*. 'Reality' is as *plural as there are brains and individual nervous systems experiencing 'reality'*. Get to know your Artist Within. We are seeking endogenous mental technology . . .

At this point you may or may not feel overwhelmed by the task I'm presenting to you. If not then you can skip this paragraph. If so then consider this: most schools teach to a wide audience. They have to. This is necessitated by the ratio of students to teachers. At any school, students *MUST be measured and evaluated against each other regardless of how limited the school may be in its APPROACHES TO TEACHING*. Remember that 'reality' is as *plural as there are brains experiencing 'reality'*. Mind is a fertile thing; one of the best ways to undermine the awesome power of your mind is to *measure yourself using someone else's criteria*. Human beings have a habit of basing their self-image on arbitrary criteria taken from *exogenous sources*; that is, *from people, or places other than themselves*.

We are seeking *endogenous* mental technology. We are acquainting ourselves with our Inner Artists; we are learning what *mental diet provides the best nourishment for our Artist Within*.

Exercise 1: think hard – scan, and rescan, for what your *genuine belief systems* may or may not be. Focus upon this relentlessly for 30 minutes. Do it again in a week (throughout this entire extreme-individual-oriented/weirdo-music-manual, this is the most beneficial exercise out of them all). Be thorough. See what checks out on close

examination. Look for any belief systems that are either false, or do you harm in the long run. Change those beliefs or abandon them. It's worth it.

“The only conspiracy theory I believe in is the one that looks back at me in the mirror . . .”

The human brain is capable of . . . fill in the blank.

As you go through the exercises herein, *do not impose your desires or expectations upon the work* you do. Allow yourself to surprise yourself. At first the exercises may seem pointless or confusing. To this I can only say that you won't get the benefit unless you do the work. (How much 'exercising' would it be to just lift one weight only one time?) I've designed this to be as thorough-yet-simple as possible – but without robbing you of the opportunity to *put the puzzle together yourself*. Each exercise is designed to impact your brain in a different way – to *augment* various pathways that lead to a more-or-less similar destination.

To make this easier I've broken down this system into 4 components, each of which will be explained:

1. Imagine
2. Listen
3. Translate
4. Execute

The 'exercises' contained throughout the manual may or may not pertain to a certain component; they might pertain to multiple at once; in any case, you'll find out with practice. *There are no right answers.*

From time to time you may notice that I contradict myself. This is intentional. I'm doing this because I've written this manual for a specific type of person: the type of person who is willing to put in the necessary work to *own themselves and their art*. All points of contradiction embedded within this manual are there to help you get in touch with *what you REALLY think and feel*. In addition to this, I've deliberately stated the same points multiple times in various ways to induce a *subconscious* effect. Have the patience to let your subconscious unfold and reveal itself to you.

Trust me – its all up-hill from here! ☺

CHAPTER 1 1/2: LISTEN

This next exercise may appear strange. Just do it. Take note of how it impacts you. Have the patience to not impose any expectations upon your work.

Remember: you are *seeking* endogenous mental technology.

Exercise 2: listen very attentively the next time you find yourself with two or more people talking excitedly to each other. While doing this, pretend that you don't speak any languages. What do you hear?

(HINT: I've tricked you . . . slightly. Doing this exercise 'perfectly' would literally mean that you would have to stop comprehending language altogether. Obviously, that's impossible . . . however it becomes easier with practice. Keep in mind the difference between an 'exercise' and a 'math problem': problems in math will always have definite answers and don't invite repetitive solving and re-solving – once it's done it's done! Exercises, on the other hand, *don't actually 'exercise' you unless you do them repeatedly.*)

Follow-up: find two birds talking to each other. What do you hear?

Sitting outside once, I heard an owl swoop down onto a nearby branch. It began talking to another owl, which responded by phrasing nearly the exact same melody, but with less excitement – and with the last 4 notes fading off into a droll. The first owl waited a few seconds, gave a small hoot, and flew off. . .

Rhythm and Melody are EVERYWHERE.

CHAPTER 2: MUSIC?!?!?!?!?

Did you know that the eardrum is actually a differentiated piece of highly sensitive skin? Music is *more than just sound*. It has a *visual*, and a *kinesthetic* component. Rhythm is kinesthetic – it is born of *motion*. You can't even *breathe* without being a sort of drummer. Harmony is geometric; harmony is visual – for the difference between notes is a *spatial relationship*. The Spatial relationships between notes in a given scale determine the *flavor* of the scale.

Music is always dancing. It is, in essence, a dance. “Music begins to atrophy when it strays from the dance . . . and poetry begins to atrophy when it strays from melody.” – Ezra Pound

Music is the *sonic result of dancing geometry*. (What do your favorite songs *taste like*?)

The Master Musician is the musician who has developed a *vocabulary of shapes*. Fluent in this language, SHe can obtain a sort of creative-ecstatic consciousness *at will*, and this provides nourishment and increased inspiration for the Artist Within.

Exercise 3: classic music notation is simply a graph of a wave . . . Waves can be plotted on an x and y coordinate system. Rhythm is the *independent variable*. And melody/harmony is the *dependent variable*. This is because *melodies exist in time* – it's as simple as that. Find any piece of classically notated music, and look at the shapes. In your mind, press ‘play’: scan your eyes across the music and interpret it – what does it sound like? Don't get hung up on ‘correct’ interpretations. *At first, scan slowly*.

There is no need to be exact . . . none at all.

CHAPTER 3: Getting To Know What Is Inside of You

Exercise 4: choose two actors/actresses – one you think is ‘good’ and one you think is ‘bad’. Do an impression of each. Watch them and imitate their voices. Check for timing and tone.

Every brain is unique. *Reality is plural.*

The process I’m giving you works best when you rid yourself of the need to ‘know’ where you’re going. In a world that efficiently turns anything and anyone into a commodity, we are frequently conditioned into believing that life is a giant game of show-and-tell. This is hazardous to your innate creativity because it discourages genuine exploration from the get-go.

Actually, it’s not hazardous to your innate creativity – *nothing is.*

As long as you’re alive, then your Artist Within is also alive. It is the *process itself that suffers* – how can you possibly embark on a journey of ecstatic creation when you’re wondering what other people might think of what you’re doing? Even the most public-image oriented entertainers of the world do what they do *as if no one was watching* . . . well, that’s not always true. But of course, the point remains: that propriety gets in the way of genuine expression. The consumer capitalist paradigm cannot exist without a buying public – without hordes of shoppers who frivolously spend money on things that they don’t need simply for the sake of feeling ‘accomplished’, ‘acceptable’, ‘big’, etc. The whole system is based on sycophantic tendencies – it exploits weak egos. To some, life is nothing more than a never-ending beauty pageant.

However . . .

I guarantee you that your Artist Within wants MORE than that. You are looking for the best diet with which to **feed** your Artist Within. You must *stay off of junk food* if you value your Artist Within. *Three of the most important platitudes that you must never ever forget ever ever ever NO MATTER WHAT:*

1. You are what you eat. (‘Food for thought’ is part of the diet)
2. Practice makes perfect. (Daydreaming is *utterly useless* compared to ACTUAL PRACTICE)
3. Your natural pace is the best pace. (Don’t hurt yourself!)

As far as what I’ve said about ‘consumer capitalism’ – I’m not saying any of these things to be needlessly reactionary. (I also recognize the fact that the people who would be reading this are probably somewhat immune to media persuasion – after all, this is a rather weird, completely non-academic, no-sponsorship, music manual written by a relatively obscure noise artist.) I’m only saying what I’m saying because if you want to

create, work, and live with personal integrity then it becomes necessary to disillusion yourself. Your Artist Within will only reveal himself (him or her – which do you prefer?) to you when you live with personal integrity. This is why if getting laid is your only reason for making music, then your music will reflect it. If placating your ego is all you care about, then your Will to Create will dissipate. Could you imagine a ‘storyteller’ who does nothing but tell you about how awesome they are? On the flipside, could you imagine a ‘storyteller’ who does nothing but whine about their (sorry to be so blunt) meaningless bullshit? Would you shovel out money to listen to someone who thinks that they deserve your attention (and money) simply because they can recite the alphabet backwards without having to think too hard about it?

“The secret to marketing is to treat people like they’re 4 years old”

Recall the first exercise of this manual. The reason why I’m being so adamant and blunt about this point is that I want you to consider the implications of mass social conditioning. It’s easy to notice hypocrisy, faults, virtues, etc. in other people. It’s easy to pigeonhole other people. However, to notice *your own conditioning* is quite another matter. To do so requires *genuine effort*. To *not* put in genuine effort is kind of like admitting that you have a megalomaniacal, ‘infallibility’ complex.

On the other hand, it requires *no effort* to ‘believe’. Oftentimes, ‘belief systems’ (B.S.) take the place of ‘knowledge’. But in fact, where genuine knowledge is present, ‘*belief*’ – in the strictest sense – *becomes unnecessary*.

False/nefarious belief systems are extremely dangerous when *attached to muscle tissue* . . .

(Going back to earlier: what do I mean by ‘weak ego’ exactly? This should suffice to explain: a ‘strong’ ego *never feels the need to increase in size* . . .)

Trust me – its all up-hill from here ☺!

Exercise 5: we are descendant of monkeys. Our closest genetic relatives are chimpanzees. Youtube comprises an excellent repository of useful information and learning. Watch *any amount* of ‘The Human Animal – the Language of the Human Body’, by Desmond Morris. The more the better, though as always, there is no rush (after all, life can get pretty damn busy). After watching it, watch some TV.

Exercise 6: throw a temper tantrum while no one is looking. Get into it. Once you’ve expended yourself, go play with an instrument and see what comes out. (NO OVERLY HARSH SELF-JUDGMENTS ALLOWED!!)

CHAPTER 4: Found in Translation

Remember what I said about belief systems and their *effect on muscle tissue*? Did you know that you could transform your internal maps of melody and rhythm *into tools for sculpting your muscular tissue*? Get into the groove – literally! Just like a sculptor whose medium is *time*, you are *carving your musical geometry into your muscles*. (Music comes from the body. Every *language* does.)

(THERE WILL BE A SECTION INCLUDED RIGHT HERE THAT EXPLAINS THE BASICS OF ‘SOLFEGE’. BUT NOT AT THE MOMENT. IF YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT THAT IS THEN LOOK IT UP. IF YOU DON’T FEEL LIKE IT THEN DON’T BOTHER. THIS IS AN EARLY STAGE OF EXPLORATION SO ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU PRACTICE ‘SOMETHING’ USING A METRONOME WHILE READING THIS EARLY DRAFT.)

Using solfege, you develop a *matrix of ‘triggers’* that serve to connect the pitches of various notes to an organized *matrix of symbols*. That system of symbols is then, via practice with a metronome, *sculpted into your muscle memory*. Once the muscle memory becomes *precisely aligned with the matrix of triggers* then *the distance between MUSICAL CONCEPT and SONIC REALITY closes*. *An entire language opens itself up to you at this point*. Does that sound absolutely rigorous and daunting? The truth is, at first, it is. However, *the precision of a single shape yields increased accuracy for all other shapes in your ever-expanding vocabulary*.

The system I’m presenting to learn is very simple.

Step 1) imagine, step 2) listen, step 3) translate, step 4) execute. The only materials necessary are: 1) an imagination (if you are convinced that you’re lacking in this area then you’re *suffering from the conditioning induced by a false belief system* – without imagination you couldn’t even *begin* to learn the language skills necessary to read this), 2) a metronome, 3) an ability to read music, and 4) any 1 thing or combination of things (and people) with which (and with whom) you can make noise with. You are what you eat. Practice makes perfect.

Exercise 8: pick up some sheet music specifically written for snare drum. Practice with a metronome by simply tapping on a counter. Count *out loud* while you practice.

Exercise 9: get some sheet music. Read it out loud using solfege. Any piece of music will do. You will very quickly see what level of skill you’ve accomplished thus far, and will be able to hone in on your technique accordingly.

Exercise 10: using the same piece of music from the previous exercise, replace the solfa-syllables with different appendages. Diagram it, and practice with a metronome. An example: you might want to turn the note G into a stomping of your left foot, while the note F could be expressed by the tapping of your right index finger, and so on and so

forth . . . *The learning of any instrument is nothing more and nothing less than the learning what muscles are needed to play it.*

The above 3 exercises can suffice to bring you to fluency on *any instrument*. The more instruments, the better you know the language of your body.

CHAPTER 5: Speaking in a sublime language

The stages of the process are as follows:

- 1) Imagine – how will you *feed* your Artist Within?
- 2) Listen – from where can you find the rhythms and melodies already inherent in your very body and environment?
- 3) Translate – how will you apprehend those shapes?
- 4) Execute – what sounds do you need to bring about your vision?

Allow yourself to not know where you are going. The results of your work will appear sooner or later . . . but if you're impatient with yourself then forget about it. I personally know one guy who, at the age of 25, had released around 400 records; the first one came out at age 15. That's 40 albums a year. That's 3 ¼ albums a month! For 10 years straight! Wow! On the other hand, I-the-author can claim to have written about 3 or 4 albums worth of material (as far as my solo work is concerned) in my lifetime. With that, I've only ever released 2 of the albums, which can compile and fit onto 1 blank CD. However! Does this make a difference? Profoundly, NO! Whatever is necessary is necessary . . . My prolific friend apparently *doesn't require* the same amount of work to achieve the results that he's looking for as I do. By contrast, I *require a great amount of time to accomplish the work set forth by myself and of my own accord*. Why is that? Am I making an excuse? Am I lazy or something? No! Absolutely not! We both work *daily* on our craft, but we are guided by our own different and personal visions. In a sense, what we both do is 'music' – however – our visions are so unique that we almost practice different crafts entirely . . . He works in a Jackson Pollack-esque manner, throwing multitudinous sounds across the auditory canvass, performing works of art via monolithic acts of sonic abandon and experimentation. I, however, prefer to work with the precision of a scientist/surgeon. I am always trying to find that repeatable melody, which once played, will always remind you of your best friend's haircut . . . I need lots of time to meditate and reflect before I can move forward with my product. Neither style is better – *'reality' is as plural as there are brains perceiving 'reality'*.

The binary categorization of these styles – my friend's and my own – can be misleading. Just like him, I too embark on wild improvisation. My friend also diligently writes out parts to songs and practices those parts to satisfaction. What is your process?

(How many times have I contradicted myself by now?)

Exercise 11: gather all of your 'important' songs, artists and records. Sort it all out by categories you design yourself based not on genre, not on scene, not on era, not even by record label, but by *emotional imprints* you've taken from the artists and songs themselves, and by a chronology of *when you found them*. What are you learning about yourself?

What do I mean by 'emotional imprint'? An emotional imprint is an *impression* you've taken of the world around you. It can be associated with anything, any place, any event,

or any person that ever did anything that affected you, hurt you, helped you, strengthened you – anything that has *changed* you.

Follow up: take a whole week to jot down any song(s) that seem liable to get stuck in your head more easily than others. Any common themes, feelings, *geometric shapes*?

You are looking for the best diet with which to feed the Artist Within. Because you can't raise a workhorse on a diet of nothing but marshmallows . . . you can't feed your Artist Within without first disillusioning yourself. You are looking for a process that is yours and yours alone. If you want to start a band, then come equipped with your Artist Within. The Artist Within you is yours and yours alone. To measure yourself on someone else's criteria is to undermine yourself in a profound way. Ultimately, there are no institutions to turn to, no standards to set, except your own.

By now there must be some confusion. Why did I have to go into all these digressions about language, social manipulation, and meditation? What does that have to do with learning an instrument?

There is no end to the process being described in this manual. That is because it is *designed to make your smarter*. Answers inhibit intelligence.

Most schools assume a unilateral standard of ignorance among students – they have to in order to function. Every message and every signal that the students receive is already encoded with a beginning, middle, and an end. Educators aren't here to tell you how your brain works and how to maximize the potential of your brain (unless you're studying neuro-chemistry, hypnosis, cognitive science, or other such related fields). They exist to tell you that $1 + 1 = 2$.

Remember the 'hint' in the middle of chapter 1 ½?

Consider the effects of social conditioning . . . what happens when a brain, otherwise overflowing with insight, measures poorly in comparison to other brains under criteria devised by a 3rd party brain? What happens to a brain when it becomes prematurely convinced that it's dumb? There are many people out there who are thoroughly convinced of their own stupidity. They go through *all that work* – gathering evidence, weighing it against counter evidence, preparing axioms – and they don't even take credit for their own efforts! I think that anyone who thinks poorly of their own intelligence should be required to write a dissertation on what makes them so inadequate. That way, we can remain in reality and avoid fantasy . . .

What we have here is a crisis that stems from a philosophical blunder that was first introduced by Aristotle . . . Aristotelian logic dictates that we live in a world filled with things that 'actually are as they are'. The flower *is* purple.

But wait . . . what if you're colorblind? How can you be sure that you're NOT colorblind?

Exercise 12: ask yourself – what can you truthfully claim to know for certain, beyond a shadow of a doubt?

(The flower *appears purple to me . . .*)

We are seeking endogenous mental technology. We are seeking the best diet with which to feed the Artist Within. We are learning a sublime language. And here is the crux of this chapter: language exists for the sake of *communication*, not *to define reality*. Language is about *navigation*.

The Master Musician is the musician who has developed a vocabulary of shapes. These shapes are formed in the very heart and life of the seeker of this sublime language – aka the Master Musician. Fluent in this language, SHe can obtain creative-ecstatic consciousness at will, and this process provides nourishment and increased inspiration for the Artist Within.

Exercise 13: how did the above paragraph sound in your head when you were reading it? Try reading it again using a different voice.

Exercise 14: after doing exercise 13, do exercise 2. Take note of how this impacts you.

Exercise 15: get 3 books. Open each to a random page. Choose a random paragraph from each. Piece together the 3 paragraphs, one in front of the other, randomly. Read your collage. Notice what your brain does to create sense out of the collage.

Language is about *navigation*. Likewise, *music theory is NOT MUSIC; music theory is merely a system that enables two or more musicians to collaborate more easily*. Music is music. *Music theory is a map*. Don't let 'music theory' *define music*; instead, use it as a map. Maps, by giving you knowledge of where you've been, enable you to *explore further*.

Exercise 16: make the best mix cd/tape/playlist you possibly can! Be eclectic about it.

(If all you care about is placating your ego then feel free to follow other people's maps until you've proven yourself a *competent cymbal monkey . . .*)

CHAPTER 6: Final (?) Summation

You are an agent of whatever exists inside of you. You must work to find out what exactly 'that' is. You can never use someone else's criteria to measure yourself. Once you glimpse even a microcosmic speck of what your true potential is, you will enter a state of creative ecstasy. By living in ecstasy, you feed your Artist Within. Your Artist Within will reveal itself to you, *as it will*. Once you have cultivated and nourished your Artist Within, *you will have something to give to the entire world*. Not convinced? *You won't KNOW until you try.*

There's one more riddle . . . The deepest principles of this music-manual can be applied towards *any* goal – musical or otherwise!